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## WORLD-POLITICS.

LONDON: BERLIN: ST. PETERSBURG: WASHINGTON.

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LONDON, *August, 1904.*

RARELY have English politics been more tense, more intricate or more baffling than at this moment. The confusion of uncertainties and speculation in which they are enveloped dates back, of course, to Mr. Chamberlain's speech in May of last year. The essence of that speech was that perseverance in Free Trade meant for Great Britain a progressive commercial decline, and for the British Empire disintegration. It pointed directly to a reversal of the fiscal system which has obtained in England since 1846 as the only means by which the Imperial connection could be maintained. Unless Preferential Tariffs with the Colonies were quickly established, the Colonial Secretary was "sure we shall fall to pieces and into separate atoms." Nor was that any new idea with Mr. Chamberlain. It had been growing on him ever since he entered the Colonial Office in 1895; in 1902 he gave public expression to it; and within the Cabinet he fought hard to get a portion of the tax on corn and flour remitted for the benefit of Colonial exporters. It was rather circumstances than any inherent novelty that caused his speech in May, 1903, to turn so tremendous a page, not only in British fiscal policy, but in Imperial relations.

For one thing, domestic politics had reached a transitional stage. After the fierce passions of the Boer War and the Education Bill, there was a sort of lull. The "man in the street" found politics very far from exciting and only mildly interesting. He was concerned with Somaliland; he had an eye on the London Education Bill; he was pondering the Irish Land Bill. But none of these things keenly engaged him. The political waters ran placidly enough to the outward eye, though with a strong under-

current that the Government found difficulty in gauging. The Opposition were as divided as ever. In all its essentials the situation was pretty much as it had been for five years and more. No moment could have been more opportune for the announcement of a new departure. Again, a peculiar interest attached to Mr. Chamberlain's speech. It was the first he delivered after his return from South Africa, from that famous tour which all England had followed with pride and applause. Everything therefore combined to lend to his words an unusual publicity and weight. The occasion was, in itself, out of the ordinary; but there was probably no one in England who expected to see it put to such amazing uses or lead to such cataclysmal results. Mr. Chamberlain had not consulted any of his colleagues in the Cabinet before making his speech. It took them as completely by surprise as it took the country. Even the preliminary paragraph in the papers that prepared the world for Mr. Gladstone's conversion to Home Rule was wanting. There was no forewarning whatever. It was soon evident that Mr. Chamberlain had no clear conception of what he was proposing, and that the celerity with which Parliament and the country caught him up, demanded details and the formulation of his suggestions in a cut-and-dried scheme, somewhat took him aback. Mr. Chamberlain had no cut-and-dried scheme to produce. Except in a general way, he had not thought the matter out. I do not mean that Mr. Chamberlain was speaking idly or carelessly when he announced his intention of saving the Empire by a system of Preferential Tariffs. What he said at Birmingham he sincerely and, indeed, passionately believed, but he had no prevision that in saying it he was about to convulse the country and the whole Empire, or that the response and the challenge would be so swift and overwhelming. But Mr. Chamberlain went off at half-cock, and it is this which explains the extraordinary immaturity of his initial proposals—his pledge, for instance, that the proceeds of the new corn tax should be devoted to an old-age-pension fund. Only the characteristic boldness of the man and his instant resourcefulness concealed, or partly concealed, the fact that behind his Birmingham speech lay not a definite policy but an idea more or less loosely grasped. Within a week it had become patent that the most forceful of English statesmen had raised and would not desert the tattered banners of Protection and Imperial Preference.

The shock was electric, incredible. There had always been a leaven of unconverted Protectionism in the Conservative party; the territorial type of legislator, here as everywhere, always, in his moments of unguarded instinct, talks Protection. There were even members of Parliament, like Mr. Chaplin and Mr. Lowther, who had won a sort of antiquarian interest by publicly and consistently championing the cause. In the eighties, under the speciously attractive name of Fair Trade, there was a movement, fought tooth and nail and with surpassing brilliancy by Mr. Chamberlain himself, that in its essence was purely Protectionist. But nothing at the beginning of last year seemed more unlikely than its revival as a political issue. Even the convinced relics of the Protectionist cause had long ago abandoned all hope of seeing it once more a vital question. Both parties had seemingly accepted Free Trade as something, like the Monarchy, fundamental, beyond argument.

Beyond all hope the Liberals found themselves once more united,—united at any rate for the negative purpose of opposition to Protection. But it was not upon them but upon the Government that public attention and speculation were concentrated. It was known that within the Cabinet itself there were many who would abandon office rather than be accomplices to a reversal of the Free Trade system. It was equally known that Mr. Chamberlain's programme had the enthusiastic backing of a large number of the rank and file not only in the Cabinet but in the party. How would Mr. Balfour be able to reconcile the two factions? Would he adopt or would he disavow the policy of his Colonial Secretary? Scarcely anybody perceived that there was a third alternative, that Mr. Balfour might go too far to satisfy the Free-Traders and not far enough to satisfy Mr. Chamberlain, and that the upshot would be the resignation of the leaders of both sections. This, as everybody knows, is what actually happened; but before it happened six crucial months passed by, during which Mr. Balfour partially disarmed the Opposition and held the malcontents in his own party in check by ordering an official "Inquiry" into the state of British commerce, and by taking the fullest advantage of the forms of Parliamentary procedure to burke discussion in the House of Commons. Then as now Mr. Balfour's indecision, or the appearance of it, contrasted piquantly enough with Mr. Chamberlain's absolute assurance and activity. Mr. Chamberlain

went straight ahead. He promptly organized the Tariff Reform League to advocate his views. No wealthier, no more perfectly equipped, no more ebullient body has ever come within the range of my political experience. In a very few months it had covered England with a network of branch societies; its lecturers, canvassers, agents and leaflets pervaded every nook and corner of the land. And there can be no question that the sweeping boldness of Mr. Chamberlain's policy, the high Imperial note he injected into it, the depth and fervor of the popular confidence in him as a man of affairs, his telling and persuasive oratory, and the feverish zeal of his supporters did for a while make an immense impression on the country. Even now the Free-Traders are not one-half so well organized for the battle as were the Protectionist forces within six months of Mr. Chamberlain's speech. So great was the flow of subscriptions and donations into the exchequer of the Tariff Reform League, so multiplying the tokens of approval and support, that even Mr. Chamberlain was deceived by them. When he started on his campaign he freely confessed in private that he had no hope of winning the next election, and that his eye was really fixed on the election after next. But at the end of six months, and on the very eve of a series of crushing by-elections, he wrote to a friend that he was convinced he would win even at the first trial of strength. He has now reverted to his original forecast.

Meanwhile, amid a growing intensity of popular interest, the struggle in the Cabinet continued. In September came the inevitable rupture. On the Protectionist side Mr. Chamberlain, and on the Free Trade side Mr. Ritchie, the Chancellor of the Exchequer; Lord George Hamilton, the Secretary for India; Lord Balfour of Burleigh, the Secretary for Scotland; Mr. Arthur Elliot, the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, and, shortly afterwards, the Duke of Devonshire, left the Government. At the same time, in letters that passed between Mr. Balfour and Mr. Chamberlain, it was clearly shown that the former was in whole-hearted sympathy and agreement with the latter's policy of Colonial Preference based on a tax on food, and only did not adopt it as the official policy of the Government because he was convinced that public opinion was not yet ripe for it. In the same letter, and in a pamphlet that was published simultaneously, Mr. Balfour, while opposed to food taxes, declared himself and his Government in

favor of Retaliation. This policy he publicly developed a few weeks later at Sheffield. He asked the people of the country "to reverse, to annul and delete altogether from their maxims of public conduct the doctrine that you must never put on taxation except for revenue purposes." That is to say, he threw overboard the fundamental principle of Free Trade and proposed to substitute for it the principle of Retaliation. Except vaguely we do not know how much this latter principle is to be understood as embracing. We know, indeed, that it does not include a duty on food or on raw material, and that it excludes the very idea of Colonial Preference; but of the circumstances in which and of the extent to which it is to be applied, we are wholly ignorant. But there is no misunderstanding the nature of Mr. Chamberlain's proposals. He laid them squarely before the country immediately after leaving the Government; he has several times restated them, and they are to be accepted, if not as final in themselves, at least as a foreshadowing of what his final plan will be. He proposed to place a two-shilling duty per quarter on foreign corn, but to let Colonial corn in free; a five-per-cent. duty on foreign meat and dairy produce, from which also Colonial exporters would be exempt; a duty on flour heavy enough to reestablish the British miller; a reduction in favor of the Colonies on the duties on fruits and wines; and an all-round ten-per-cent. duty on foreign manufactured goods. The increase in the cost of living thus produced he proposed to offset by reducing the tax on tea by three-fourths, and on sugar, coffee and cocoa by a half.

Between these two policies there is on paper and in economic theory a clear distinction. The one, though it abandons the basic principles of Free Trade, only does so on the colorable pretext of obtaining Freer Trade; the other is downright Protection, complicated and to an extent alleviated by Colonial Preference. But, politically, the difference between the policies is not so marked. For one thing, Mr. Chamberlain has proved himself by far the stronger personality. He has labored unintermittently for his policy. The result is that the Chamberlain programme has swamped the Balfour programme, and that hardly anybody now believes in the reality of the latter as an issue standing by itself. For another thing, Mr. Balfour has publicly applauded the Chamberlain policy; if he thought it politically advisable, it is probable that he would himself advocate it. He has done everything to en-

courage the Protectionists and everything to discourage the Free-Traders in his own party. He appointed Mr. Austen Chamberlain, an out-and-out Protectionist, to the Chancellorship of the Exchequer; he has allowed his colleagues in the Cabinet to take office in the reconstituted Liberal-Unionist Association, which is now nothing but a branch of the Tariff Reform League; he has watched without protest the hounding of Free Trade Unionists from their constituencies; and he has lent his personal and official support to avowedly Protectionist candidates. From all this the country at large has inferred, not without a certain disgust, that Mr. Balfour is a Protectionist at heart, but dare not say so; and that when the proper time comes, he will merge his own policy of Retaliation into the bolder one of Protection and Colonial Preference. Meanwhile, his half-way house has served as an adroit and useful refuge for the doubters and fence-sitters. So far only thirty Free Trade Unionists have broken away from him and voted against him. There are other Free-Traders in the party, and in the Cabinet itself, who are still able to persuade themselves that Mr. Balfour's policy of Retaliation is an effective barrier against the party's complete reversion to Protection; who look upon him rather as a subtle opponent than as an ally of Mr. Chamberlain; and who expect him eventually to land on the Free Trade side of the fence. On the other hand, those who subscribe to the Chamberlain policy outnumber the Free Trade and the Retaliation Unionists put together. For the past year, therefore, Mr. Balfour, with infinite dexterity, has been obliged to do nothing that would alienate either section of his party. He has completely succeeded; his party still stands chipped, indeed, but not broken; his majority is still secure. The consummate ingenuity with which Mr. Balfour has avoided every trap and every peril, baffled all inquiries, "cornered" the Opposition and wrapped friend and foe alike in a mist of brilliant and bewildering sophistries, constitutes a Parliamentary performance of the highest order. But it is not a performance of the kind that attracts the people. To them it seems shiftily, disingenuous and feeble. The British electorate, like the American, abominates above everything the appearance of vacillation and indecision; and the strong wave of disapproval that has already overwhelmed Mr. Chamberlain's policy owes much of its impetus to Mr. Balfour's "tactics."

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BERLIN, *August, 1904.*

THE events of the past month have shown conclusively that "friendship with Russia at any price"—Bismarck's legacy to his country—is still the pith and root of German policy. Political friendships are usually one-sided, but not since 1863, when Bismarck assisted Russia to suppress the Polish rebellion, have Germans been more forcibly reminded of that fact, or more uncomfortably conscious of their obligations to their Eastern neighbor. For, at the very moment when Germany was prostituting the law, in deference to the wishes of the Russian police, Russia was requiting her by seizing her ships. The provocation was certainly great. It was the greater because nobody in Germany had anticipated that Russia would be so ungracious or ungrateful as to molest German shipping. Germans had witnessed the expulsions of Russian students from Germany; they had learned that at Wiesbaden their Emperor had given the Tsar the most binding assurances as to Germany's friendship—thereby enabling Russia to denude her Western frontier of troops; they had read in the newspapers the Emperor's telegram on the death of Admiral Makaroff, that "Russia's mourning was Germany's mourning," as also his Majesty's telegram to his Wyborg regiment; they had heard that Krupp's establishment was working overtime, manufacturing arms and ammunition for the Russian army, and they knew that five great liners had been sold to the Russian Government. They had every right to expect that their own attitude of "benevolent neutrality" would receive, at any rate, polite acknowledgment. Neither the German Government, nor the German people, profess the slightest interest in the maintenance of the Black Sea treaties; and, when the irregular activity of the Russian Volunteer Fleet in the Red Sea began, it was the conviction of the country that German shipping would go unmolested. It was, therefore, but natural that the seizure of the "Prinz Heinrich" should throw Germans into consternation. At the time, undoubtedly, profound indignation did prevail among the general public, who felt that the cup of humiliation was flowing over. For the first time for many years, a number of German newspapers published some very nasty things about Russian honor, rule and behavior, and it was evident that all the ingredients that go to produce an outburst of popular passion were present. That was on July 17th. The following day, Sunday, Count von Bülow



took action, and with a few passes of his magic wand the situation changed. Earnest injunctions were issued to the press to exercise great restraint, and from that moment until the final settlement of the affair the public heard comparatively little about the matter.

Looking back at the incident to-day, we can see it as a whole. It forms an interesting episode in the relations of the two Powers, viewed psychologically or politically. Not only has no diminution of cordiality in Russo-German relations ensued from the incident, but there is evidence that, diplomatically, it has rather improved Germany's position with Russia than otherwise. The "towering friendship"—to use a Bismarckian phrase—of Germany for Russia is now more than ever a fact, and von Bülow has demonstrated that he, too, knows that politics is an "art."

It detracts nothing from Count von Bülow's success if it be pointed out that no more ill-timed moment for gratuitously affronting Germany could possibly have been chosen. On the very day the mail-bags of the "Prinz Heinrich" were seized, M. de Witte was closeted with the Chancellor at Norderney endeavoring to come to an understanding (since effected) about the new Commercial Treaty. And when, a week later, the "Scandia" was brought into Port Said by a Russian prize crew, Germans were awaiting with suppressed emotion the verdict from Königsberg. It is no exaggeration to say that the Russian cruiser's escapade affected both issues in a way highly satisfactory to Germany.

A few days after the seizure of the "Prinz Heinrich" the German Ambassador at St. Petersburg was instructed to make a complaint to the Russian Government, and to point out courteously that, while Germany conditionally recognized the right of search, the confiscation of the mail-bags would have to be regarded as an unfriendly act. This complaint was in no sense whatever a protest, and the question of the status of the Russian ships was carefully avoided. Russia, as usual, immediately promised redress, and pending developments the German semi-official press was instructed to refer to the matter as an "isolated" case. The indignation in England at the seizure of the "Malacca" opportunely diverted public attention, and the affair was being rapidly forgotten, when the second seizure was announced. For a moment, the Government was on the horns of a dilemma. It looked as if a principle might become involved, whereas Germany's main endeavor was to avoid all question of principle. The point at issue

was: Are the Russian captains acting in accordance with orders received from the Government? Very properly, no time was lost. Count von Bülow, the day of the announcement of the seizure of the "Scandia," telegraphed fresh instructions to the German Ambassador at St. Petersburg, who on the day following (Sunday) was able to announce that the Russian Government had already issued orders for the release of the vessel. The order took effect at Port Said that evening. The Chancellor's success was undeniable. On the Monday, the German "well-informed" press dwelt with self-complacency upon the achievements of German diplomacy, the aggressions of the cruisers were ascribed to errors of judgment on the part of the captains, and the world was assured that the relations between the two countries were unimpaired. A few days later, Russia proved her contrition by issuing passes to German ships.

The question arises: How did the Chancellor accomplish this? It was certainly not by means of protests such as once astonished Lord Salisbury on the occasion of the seizures of the "Bundesrath" and other vessels by British war-ships, though there never was a doubt as to the status of the British vessels. And yet Russia's prompt settlement of the affair would seem to suggest that some pressure was exercised. The truth is, pressure was not necessary. Russia had made a mistake; and the moment the situation was understood at St. Petersburg Germany was promised, and granted, full reparation. Nothing as yet has transpired as to the question of indemnities. But this much is certain: Germany found herself in the rare position of being able to dictate terms to Russia. She was able to point out that the status of the Black Sea Volunteer Fleet was of no concern to her, but that if German shipping was molested by that fleet she would be compelled to remember that she had been signatory to the Berlin Treaty. She was able to read Russia a lesson on the subject of gratitude, and to remind her that France was not going to plunge into war with England for the sake of those bottoms, whereas the tacit support of Germany would greatly strengthen Russia's position towards England, if it should really be thought desirable at St. Petersburg to make the whole question of the Dardanelles a fighting issue. Lastly, she was able to toy with the threat of cooperation with England, and to hold out indefinite promises of aid in settling the Eastern question at the conclusion of the war. In a word

Germany's arguments proved, as in the circumstances was inevitable, unanswerable, and Count von Alvensleben had the satisfaction of transmitting to Berlin the assurance that the auxiliary cruisers of the Volunteer Fleet would not again "be utilized for the visitation and seizure of neutral ships in the Red Sea." British ships have been seized since that assurance was given; but there can be no doubt that, in the case of Germany, that assurance will be binding even upon the captains of the Volunteer Fleet.\*

Thus Count von Bülow, with scarcely an effort, has achieved an imposing diplomatic success. At home, Germans are very much satisfied with the result, which they attribute to the firm attitude of the German Government. Nor has Russia reason to complain. The anti-Russian invective which broke out spontaneously in portions of the German press has been atoned for by the compliments meted out to the Russian Government on the settlement of the affair by the German semi-official organs.

The incident, too, invites comparison. How strangely different was Germany's attitude towards Great Britain at the beginning of 1900. In the case of Russia, what reserve, what moderation, what national modesty! There have been no Pan-German, Anti-Russian crusades, no savage outbursts in the press, no interpellations in the Reichstag, and no violently worded notes. The Chancellor has not been called upon publicly to denounce Russian methods, and he has taken very good care not to do so. And the whole incident has been put before the public by the "well-informed" press as an "isolated" case of irresponsible aggression.

The whole attitude of Germany towards Russia is well worth noting. It would seem to show that, in all questions of policy in which England and Russia are concerned and Germany has to make her choice between them, she will, invariably and inevitably, side with Russia in opposition to Great Britain.

More interesting to Germans even than the seizure of their ships has been the notorious trial at Königsberg. There, in the old law courts, a scene has been enacted which would be almost grotesque, if it were not for the everlasting stigma it has cast upon the political honor of Germany, and of the Prussian judiciary. Nine months ago, it was announced that a number of

\* The sinking of the "Thea" is not a case in point. But here again the passive attitude of Germany is remarkable.

Socialists had been arrested, charged with high treason against Russia by aiding and abetting the circulation of seditious writing, *lèse-majesté* against the Tsar, and belonging to a secret organization of a revolutionary character. As time went on, public curiosity in the case increased, and the Government was called upon to define its position. This it did with great solemnity. The Prussian Minister of Justice, and Herr von Richthofen, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, both gravely announced that a seditious movement had been discovered, and that the offenders were to be brought to justice. Thus supported, judicially and politically, by the highest responsible authorities, the trial opened. The Crown prosecutors appeared with huge bundles of documents, pamphlets, leaflets and letters in the Russian language, and then had to admit that they could not read them; moreover they had not been sorted. The charge sheet filled three hundred octavo pages. It was then discovered that not one of the nine accused knew one word of Russian, and the prosecution was unable to prove at whose house, or in whose possession, this or that particular document had been seized. Days passed in translating and reading the writings. Experts on civilization were called as witnesses, and Professor Reussner deposed on the chaos and anarchy of inner Russia. Thus the unique spectacle was witnessed of a learned professor deliberately called to pronounce sentence, in a German Court of law, on the flagitious rule in Russia. Finally it was discovered that the legal basis for the trial was wanting. It transpired that the Russian Consul had doctored documents and bamboozled the German Government. At the eleventh hour, telegrams were sent to Russia, and to the Wilhelmstrasse, to inquire whether any treaty between Germany and Russia existed, as indicated in the Russian consular report, whereby reciprocity of treatment was guaranteed Germany in the case of a similar trial for high treason in Russia. The German Foreign Office had to reply in the negative. Russia characteristically vouchsafed no answer. On this question the whole case stood and fell. The trial was brought to an abrupt conclusion. The speeches of the defence were masterly pieces of forensic argument, and the son of the founder and late leader of the German Social Democracy, Dr. Liebknecht, inveighed with impassioned eloquence against the Russian police régime. All that had been proved, all that could be proved, was that a little smuggling had been carried on. Result: All the nine

prisoners were acquitted on all the counts relating to Russia, six of them only receiving sentences varying from two to three months' imprisonment for being members of a secret organization.

The ignominy of the fiasco at Königsberg has been keenly felt by Germans. If it is endured so patiently it is because it is known that the trial was undertaken by the Government as a political favor to Russia, to whose will all things in Germany—even the law and national dignity—are subservient.

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ST. PETERSBURG, August, 1904.

THE war against Japan is eminently unpopular in Russia. It is being waged by a mere section of the Government regardless of the will of the people. The persons who are mainly responsible for bringing it on are neither professional politicians nor even members of the administration. They are mostly outsiders, who, for the time being, enjoyed the implicit confidence of the Tsar, which in spite of the disastrous results of their short-sighted measures they have not yet forfeited. And it is those two cardinal facts—the irresponsible power of the governing *junta* and the determination of its members to suppress the inarticulate but determined opposition of the people—that shape the whole policy of the Empire. Thus Russia's relations with foreign Powers are liable to sudden fluctuations, owing to the hasty action of this exalted personage or that without previous consultation with the Foreign Office; and the intelligent as well as the uneducated classes of the nation are incessantly striving, the former by agitation, the latter chiefly by violence, to free themselves from the fetters which arrest the cultural development of the individual and impede the natural growth of the people.

The same influences are at work ripening Russia's official intercourse with Germany into a degree of friendship which differs little from an alliance. The Grand-Duke Alexander Mikhailovitch has done much to forge the links which bind the two Governments. And his motive is Germany's cooperation, partly given and partly promised, with the Russian Government in its twofold struggle against Japan abroad and Russian malcontents at home. Thus in the matter of the pseudo-cruisers the Kaiser's Government has undertaken to uphold Russia's claim to despatch vessels to any part of the world as merchantmen, then to author-

ize them to act as war-ships and, lastly, to obtain for them immunity from attack by transforming them into trading ships once more. Again, when the war is ended and peace negotiations have begun, Russia is anxious to settle her differences with Japan without reference to outsiders. For "the predominance of Russia on the Pacific" is the aim of the war, as the Tsar has defined it. Now, President Roosevelt once indicated that the policy of the United States has a similar ultimate object in view. Besides, the maritime Powers of the world are unwilling to allow the most promising markets of the future to be closed to them forever. Hence they too may desire to circumscribe the field of negotiations between the two belligerents. And as Russia, or rather the Grand-Dukes who now rule that Empire, are resolved to brook no such interference with their plans, they naturally look out betimes for valuable support, and this is expected from Germany.

Against the people of Russia who are struggling for a living wage against the State, which is now the great employer of labor, for elementary instruction and the right of worshipping God as their conscience dictates, the Kaiser's Government has rendered services which, in the words of the independent German press, are calculated to expose the Fatherland to universal odium. Russian spies, organized and paid by the late Minister von Plehve, received authority to carry on operations there as in their own country. Subjects of the Tsar resident in Prussia, Würtemberg and elsewhere were watched, their houses searched and the names of subscribers to liberal Russian periodicals were ascertained and communicated to the Tsar's police, who arrested and imprisoned them. Wrong Russian translations of harmless pamphlets were made and relied upon by the German police as grounds for seizing consignments of them destined for St. Petersburg and for apprehending the senders. Russians who had broken no law but were obnoxious to their own police, whose clutches they had escaped, were seized in Germany and forced not only to quit the territory, but to cross over into Russia, whence they were deported to the island of Saghalien or immured in fortress dungeons. And, having achieved these things, the Berlin Foreign Office officially requested the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs to confer decorations and orders upon the German police and detectives who had "shadowed," seized and delivered these harmless men.

To those two ties which link the Governments of the Tsar and

the Kaiser may be added a third: mistrust of the United States. Down to a relatively recent date the feeling between the Great Republic and the Tsardom was distinctly amicable. But the resolve of the American people not to assent to the closing of the markets and mineral wealth of the Far East to their commercial and industrial enterprise has transformed friendship into bitter enmity. This sudden change is duly reflected by the gaudy pictures of the war which are sold in myriads to the Muscovite masses. In these specimens of rudest art Russia is depicted as thrashing her enemy, while Uncle Sam almost always figures as the sneaking backer of Japan, eager to rob her of the fruit of her victories, but too niggardly to help defray the cost of winning them. To the middle classes the same conception is made plastic and audible in the summer theatres of St. Petersburg and other large cities. There the pathetic and tragic aspect of life at the front is sketched in a series of brilliant scenes, relieved by the Britisher and the Yankee depicted as cowardly big bullies who egg on little Japan to certain ruin that they may live in luxury. The baneful work begun by pictures and theatres is completed by serious organs of the press, whose very exaggerations will soon render even calumny harmless. Yankees and Britishers are there denounced as villainous marplots, who stick at no crime and even grudge no expense to raise up difficulties to Russia. Thus, strange to say, the American dollar is found circulating among all those peoples who may become troublesome to the Government of the Tsar, and the sources of this flow of gold are the banking accounts of American missionaries and commercial agents, who devote themselves to the hatching of foreign plots and the engineering of insurrections.

If Americans and Englishmen thus strike below the belt, it is only natural that the Japanese should demean themselves as wild savages. Kuroki's soldiers, therefore, are described as spending their time after hard-fought battles in torturing the wounded and mutilating the dead. They are barbarians, the Russian press declares, and should be put beyond the pale of civilization.

Those are some of the means employed to console the people of Russia for their reverses on sea and land, and to awaken enthusiasm for the war. But the masses, indifferent to the fate of Manchuria and Corea, act on the maxim that charity begins at home. Hence the people are deeply interested in the war, but mainly

because they hope that a Russian defeat will end the era of autocracy, in which they desecry the source of their monotonous misery. Those among them who observe and reason hold that the governing *junta*, having neglected the intellectual needs and material well-being of the people in order to be ready for war, has failed to discharge even this one task of its own choosing, and has thus reduced its system to an absurdity. It is in those events of the war which bid fair to prove the correctness of this view that the popular interest centres, and not in the fate of the peoples of the Far East. The bulk of the nation grudges the money and the men now being sacrificed for a political white elephant, while the masses of Russians are in want of the very necessities of life.

Americans cannot grasp the issues of the fateful struggle now going on between the people and the governing few without acquiring some ideas about the way in which the pinch of the administrative shoe is felt. The Russians, it should be premised, have no taste for military glory, no greed of foreign territory. Their rulers, on the other hand, anxious to keep them from brooding over their grievances at home, compel them to furnish the funds needed for the annexation of ever more territory, while what they already possess is left practically unexploited. The Government, therefore, is extremely wealthy, while the bulk of the people are living in hunger and squalor. The Treasury is in receipt of the largest revenue ever known, which it is systematically increasing by leaps and bounds unparalleled in history. Between the years 1891 and 1903, the Imperial receipts were more than doubled, rising from \$462,240,243 in the first-named year to \$973,137,354 in 1903. This money was spent on ships, armaments and railways which yield little or no returns. The lower classes who supplied the greater part of those enormous sums scarcely benefited by their outlay.

For, during the same period, the peasants ate less bread, lost a large percentage of their horses and horned cattle, and in many places had to discard even cabbage and milk as articles of food, while the rate of State expenditure upon education fell off. Thus, the Government allots only one-half per cent. of its budget for elementary schools for its own people, while expending large sums for the educational establishments of those foreign races whose political sympathies it is anxious to win, such as the Serbs, Poles, Bulgarians and Lithuanians. The total amount allowed by the



State for all educational objects is about 7.7 cents per head of the population, whereas the entire outlay of the Government runs up to \$7 98. But this is not all. Education is positively discouraged, and the obstacles thrown by the authorities in the way of opening schools are almost insuperable. Yet the Russian people hunger and thirst after knowledge. But the maxim followed by the Government is that it is easier to govern autocratically an illiterate than a literate people.

In proportion as education has been frowned down, the consumption of *vodka* is being actively fostered by the State, which now monopolizes the sale of alcohol and relies upon it as the most important source of the Imperial revenue. The consumption of alcohol was on the wane when Minister de Witte introduced the State Monopoly. For the ten years previous it had diminished by twenty-five per cent., but it then received a powerful fillip from the State, and has ever since gone on augmenting.

Another of the grievances of the people consists in the fact that they are taxed congruously with a preconceived system which takes no account of their general economic condition, or even of their exceptional needs. Thus the year after the famine of 1892 the Imperial receipts showed no falling off; on the contrary, they exceeded the estimates by 84,000,000 roubles. And yet the destitution of the famine-stricken peasants was such that donations of money and corn, on a large scale, were despatched by foreign philanthropists to Russia. Hand in hand with this taxation goes the forced export of corn, of which more is sold than the peasants can afford to dispense with. And here is the proof: 330 kilograms is the amount of rye distributed by the Government in famine years to keep each individual peasant barely alive. Yet statistics seem to have established the astonishing fact that what remains of the corn after the annual quantity has been sent out of the country amounts only to 240 kilograms per head!

The existence of the average husbandman is a series of hardships which only a fatalist could bear with resignation. An official who has lived among the people as the representative of the Government writes in this strain:

"Even at present, half of the hovels are heated in the 'black manner.' That is to say, in the morning when the fire is lighted the upper part of the hut is wrapped in dense smoke, which escapes through chinks in the walls or through a special aperture, but mostly through the door,

which is kept open for the purpose. Meanwhile, the inmates are sprawling or seated on the floor, in order to breathe as little of the smoke as may be. Through the open door, the air from outside comes in, bringing with it a frost of thirteen degrees below zero. The heating operation over, every opening is closed, and the hovel becomes as hot as a steam bath. And towards morning the water often freezes again. The walls and the couch are coated with a layer of black by the smoke. And it is here that the family of about eight souls lives: the old man with the old woman, the married son, the daughter and the children. Here they eat, here they sleep on straw; here the women bring their children into the world, here they spin and weave; here the boys do their school tasks; here too are a calf, lambs, sometimes sucking-pigs, poultry; here a mephitic odor prevails; a lamp burns without a glass or it is not lighted at all, if there happens to be no money to buy petroleum."

It is against such results of autocracy that the peasantry murmur and the intelligent classes protest. And it is to the suppression of all such manifestations of dissatisfaction that the whole domestic policy of the Government has been tending. A commission was appointed by the State to inquire into the causes of the misery of the peasants, and its members were exhorted to speak their minds freely. One and all, noblemen, landowners, lawyers, schoolmasters, gave it as their opinion that the system of Government must be changed, the peasants allowed to quit the soil at their will, and the industrious inhabitants of the country freed from the obligation of working for their lazy and drunken fellows. But the men who uttered these convictions were visited with swift punishment by M. von Plehve. A medical Congress assembled last January from all the ends of Russia to concert measures for coping with infectious and contagious disease. They, too, having counselled education and reform as the first steps, were speedily dispersed to their homes and punished. A Congress for the encouragement of technical education was convoked at the same time, and their resolution, unanimously passed, amounted to a condemnation of autocracy and a demand for representative Government. Then the omnipotent Minister von Plehve forbade all further Congresses.

M. von Plehve was the incarnation of the autocratic principle. His life-work was to establish absolutism on a firm basis, and to develop it still further. Hence, he gave power to all provincial governors to banish noblemen from their estates without trial or explanation; he persecuted the Jews; he abolished the home rule of the Finns; he approved the coercion inaugurated by Bobrikoff

in Finland; he appointed as Bobrikoff's successor Prince Obolensky, who had had women flogged in the south of Russia; he deprived Armenians of their churches, schools and private endowments; he created a *cabinet noir* in the post-office where private letters are opened and copied; he flooded German, Swiss, French and English cities with spies; he gagged the newspaper press; he banished outspoken journalists to Siberia at a moment's notice, without allowing them to put on warm clothing or borrow a little money; he had a girl of seventeen arrested in the dead of night, sent with detectives to Odessa to be confronted with political prisoners, and, when she was shown to be innocent, she was set free at eleven o'clock at night, a thousand miles from her home, without a cent in her pocket or an acquaintance in the town; he made it known throughout the length and breadth of Russia that no opposition to the Government is or can be legal and that all dissatisfaction, however expressed, is criminal.

The upshot of this policy is the total divorce of the Government from the moderate, patriotic and honest elements of the country. Good advice and trustworthy knowledge of the popular frame of mind are no longer within its reach. Its instruments and agents are selected from a category whose members are chiefly concerned to obtain personal success. And as there is no legal opposition, the ranks of the illegal agitators are recruited by fresh forces who are bent on attaining their end by whatever means may commend themselves as efficacious.

It was to a plot hatched by these desperate men that the ill-fated Minister fell a victim. He was aware that his life was in danger; but he had organized the detective system so thoroughly that he felt easy in his mind.

Five days before his death he received information that a fresh plot against his life would soon be carried out, and he gave orders that every suspected person in the capital should be searched. A highly respectable single lady was thus visited, at half past three o'clock at night, by a superintendent of the police, five assistants, ten policemen and one female detective. The chief officer insisted on entering her room, on the ground that in political matters there is no sex, but she finally obliged him to allow the female detective to be present while she was dressing. Every nook and corner of the three little rooms was scrutinized, the boards of the floor were raised and the fruitless search was

continued from half past three until eleven next morning. But the real conspirators were left in peace, and added another blood-stained page to the gory annals of contemporary Russia.

At present, the condition of the Tsardom borders upon anarchy. There is no Government, but only an inaccessible camarilla, with unlimited power untempered by responsibility. There is no Opposition, but only a nation of inarticulate malcontents and a party of desperate conspirators, followers, as they themselves declare, of Brutus and of Charlotte Corday. The war which was begun by the ruling *junta* in blindness will be carried on by them in self-defence, for a Russian defeat would connote the end of absolutism. Meanwhile the bulk of the people look forward to the victory of Japan as the term of their own sufferings and the inauguration of an era of education, freedom of conscience, peace and material prosperity.

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WASHINGTON, August, 1904.

THE economical solidarity of civilized peoples in the twentieth century is strikingly exemplified by the effect of the war in the Far East on American interests. It was, of course, foreseen from the outbreak of hostilities that the fate of our commerce with Manchuria would depend on the outcome of the contest. Our exports to the three Chinese provinces which lie northeast of the Great Wall, and to which collectively the name of Manchuria is given, had signally increased during the decade preceding the Boxer troubles. There was no reason to doubt that the development would continue, if the administration of those provinces should revert from Russian to Chinese hands, and the enjoyment of the rights of intercourse conceded to us by treaty should thus be secured. The promise to make of Dalny a free port might be broken, like the promise to evacuate Chinese territory at a specified time, and few Americans were so credulous as to believe that, if Manchuria became Russian, their products would long be suffered to compete with Russian commodities on equal terms in the Manchurian market. It was not to be expected, therefore, that American manufacturers and merchants would be glad to witness a definite triumph of Russia over Japan. They had good reason to desire the contrary result. The Tokio Government has repeatedly announced that, if successful, it would

look to Russia exclusively for the fruits of victory. Besides a formal recognition of her right to control Corea, Japan might properly exact a large pecuniary indemnity for the cost of the war, together with territorial compensation in the shape of the island of Saghalien, the strip of Manchurian seacoast on the southern tip of which stands Vladivostok, and that section of the Liao-tung peninsula which includes Dalny and Port Arthur, and which was leased for twenty-five years to Russia. It may also be taken for granted that Japan would require the surrender of the railway lines which Russia has been allowed to construct from the Siberian frontier to Vladivostok and Port Arthur, but which, after the loss of those ports, she would have no excuse for retaining. Confining himself to these demands, the Mikado, it is understood, would cheerfully acquiesce in the reinstatement of Chinese authority throughout Manchuria, from the right bank of the Amur River to the Bay of Corea. Thenceforth, the privileges granted to us by our treaty of commerce with China would become operative throughout the region which has been the theatre of conflict, with the exception of the small tract on the Liao-tung peninsula which was leased, as we have said, to Russia, but which will have become Japan's by right of conquest.

It was mainly from this point of view that, at the outset, the Far-Eastern contest was regarded in the United States. We wanted to keep and expand our market in Manchuria, and the conviction that this desire was attainable only through Japan's success had more influence on the popular mind than racial antipathy—of which, indeed, there was hardly a trace—or than the traditional friendliness which has long marked the relations of the United States and Russia. As the war has progressed, however, it has become evident that our interests might be materially affected in more points than one. Not only are American citizens, as exporters, and as the owners of a valuable railway concession, directly concerned in the maintenance of China's authority and territorial integrity, but it is for them a matter of moment that the rights of neutrals shall suffer no impairment at the hands of either belligerent. Of course, international law has only been partially codified by the St. Petersburg and Geneva conventions, and by the treaties of Paris and Washington. So far as they go, the rules propounded in those instruments are, no doubt, binding on the parties to the com-

pacts. There remains, however, a wide field wherein it is not always easy to say where international law begins and international morality ends. By the former term is meant the rules of conduct that the nations of the civilized world admit, nay, insist upon. Every addition to them represents a forward step in the path of enlightenment and humanity; or else an adjustment to new conditions and instruments of warfare. Among the questions which the present war has forced into the foreground, and in which the United States are manifestly interested, is whether, owing to the greatly increased range of modern artillery, the three-mile limit—the traditional boundary of territorial waters—is not much too short; and to what extent, under what conditions and at what distance from the actual theatre of military or naval operations wireless telegraphy may be used by neutrals. Should, for instance, a war correspondent, himself the subject or citizen of a neutral State, have the right to secure, by means of a balloon, sent up from a neutral vessel far outside the three-mile limit, information regarding the internal condition of a beleaguered fort, and communicate it by wireless telegraphy to his newspaper, which would publish it to the world, and, inferentially, to the blockaders? Then, again, what are the rights and correlative duties of neutrals as regards the hospitality that may be offered to the war-vessels of a belligerent? That was a question of great moment to us during our Civil War, and it has been again brought home to us by the seizure of the “*Retshitelny*” in the harbor of Chefoo.

The Russians assert that, by capturing the destroyer in neutral waters, Japan committed a breach of international law, and that China, through its representative at Chefoo, connived at the act. China, on her part, denies connivance, and has demanded from Japan reparation for the alleged violation of her neutrality; while the Japanese have thus far persisted in retaining the vessel, asserting that provocation for the seizure was given by the Russians. Evidently, a case is presented for The Hague Tribunal, or for an arbitrator to be agreed upon by the parties in interest. At the hour when we write, Secretary Hay, with his usual discretion, has forbore to assume the truth of the Russian, the Japanese or the Chinese version of the facts, and, consequently, has refrained from addressing any protest on the subject to any of the chief Powers implicated in the transaction.

Count Cassini, the Russian Ambassador at Washington, would have had our Government take for granted the correctness of the Russian account, and apply a species of moral coercion to Japan and China for the purpose of procuring the return of the captured vessel and the payment of an indemnity. Even if Count Cassini's report of the facts were known to be well founded, it would not follow that the United States, merely because they had suggested the desirability of respecting China's neutrality, had bound themselves to enforce the performance by China of a neutral's duty, and to assure to her the enjoyment of a neutral's rights. At the time when the subject of China's neutrality was first brought by Secretary Hay to the attention of the Powers concerned, he was asked what course he would pursue in the event of China's neutrality being violated by herself or by one of the belligerents. Mr. Hay replied, in effect, that he would cross that bridge when he came to it. He has come to the bridge now, and, apparently, his method of crossing it is to declare that, while he views the Chefoo incident with regret, he denies that any obligation to require reparation rests upon our State Department. But we must recognize the importance to ourselves of a reference of the affair to an international tribunal, in view of the likelihood, not to say certainty, that, in some future contest, the war-vessels of a belligerent may seek refuge in our Atlantic, Pacific or insular ports, or propose to traverse our Panama Canal. What Americans hope is that their State Department will, by friendly representations, prevail upon the Governments of Tokio, St. Petersburg and Peking to submit the conflicting testimony and the questions raised thereby to The Hague international court. The three new rules which the Treaty of Washington (1871) directed the Geneva Board of Arbitration to apply to the "Alabama" case, rules to which England reluctantly assented, were that a neutral government is bound, first, to use "due diligence" to prevent the fitting out, arming or equipping within its jurisdiction of any vessel which it has reasonable ground to believe is intended to cruise or to carry on war against a Power with which it (the neutral government) is at peace, and also to use like diligence to prevent the departure from its jurisdiction of any vessel intended to cruise or carry on war as above, such vessel having been adapted, in whole or in part, within such jurisdiction to warlike use; secondly,

not to permit either belligerent to make use of its ports or waters as the base of naval operations against the other, or for the purpose of renewal or augmentation of military supplies or arms or the recruitment of men; and, thirdly, to exercise due diligence in its own ports or waters, as to all persons within its jurisdiction, to prevent any violation of the foregoing obligations and duties. If China, as Russia asserts, has violated these principles, we ought, no doubt, to urge compliance with them by diplomatic representations at Peking. The phrase "due diligence" was undoubtedly vague, but it was defined at Geneva to mean that the diligence ought to be proportioned to the belligerent's risk of suffering from any failure of the neutral to fulfil his obligations. It is plain enough that Japanese commerce might be seriously imperilled, if the Russian cruiser at Shanghai were permitted to leave that port with a full supply of coal. Admitting that she could not be expected to return to Port Arthur, which, if it were not already in Japanese hands, would be closely invested, we must recognize that the supply of the combustible conceded to her should be strictly limited to the amount needed to carry her to Vladivostok. It is also pertinent to recall another important principle which the United States established beyond dispute in the "Alabama" controversy. Whatever the obligations of a neutral in any given case may be, failure to fulfil them is not excused, either by defects of the municipal law or by successful evasions of that law. A neutral State ought to make its laws conformable to its international duties, and to compel its subjects, or those of a belligerent, to obey them. If it fails in either respect, and injury to a belligerent is the consequence, a neutral State is answerable to the injured party under the law of nations.

Of incomparably more importance to the United States than any other question raised incidentally during the Far-Eastern War is Russia's assertion of a right to transfer food from the category of articles *conditionally* contraband to the list of those *absolutely* contraband. If the St. Petersburg Government had wished to demonstrate the existence of a vital community of interest between the United States and Great Britain, it could not have hit upon a more effective expedient to that end. By confiscating American flour consigned, not to the Japanese Government, nor to a blockaded Japanese port, nor to a Japanese military or naval force, but to private persons in Japan, Russia



violated a principle the maintenance of which in international law has come to be indispensable to Great Britain, as the largest importer, and to the United States, as the largest exporter, of food products. The position of England with regard to such commodities has changed within a century. In 1783, she made large seizures of provisions destined for the French Republic, on the plea that there was a chance of reducing France by famine. The United States at that time protested against the notion that provisions, not consigned to a blockaded port, could in any circumstances be contraband—a position more advanced than that taken in the modern American doctrine that an actual *military* destination, even of luxuries, will impress upon the cargo a contraband character.

Among modern jurists, Ortolan excused provisions under all circumstances from the class of contraband goods. Now, apparently, our State Department means to hold in the "Arabia" case that there must be *prima facie* proof of the military destination in order to justify the treatment of provisions as contraband. We are informed that the British Foreign Office has made an identical declaration. It is certain that, if England were engaged in war with a Continental coalition, her opponents would desire to treat food as contraband, and they would be certain to recall the plea, which, as we have said, was put forward by a British Ministry, that it was lawful to employ the weapon of famine against a hostile people. If England had permitted Russia's seizure of the American flour consigned to Japanese merchants on the steamship "Arabia" to pass without remonstrance, she would have acquiesced in the establishment of a precedent which might have spelled for her catastrophe. Our State Department would have shown itself equally short-sighted, had it failed to protest with promptness and firmness against the doctrine propounded at St. Petersburg; for, otherwise, in the event of England's becoming involved in a contest with two or more Continental Powers, and losing temporarily command of the sea, we might have been cut off from the largest consumer of our food products. The discussion of the "Arabia" affair has revealed to Americans and Englishmen the identity of their national interests in a vital particular. There is no doubt that the two peoples have been brought closer together by this incident of the Far-Eastern war.